



The Commission on Language Learning: Where are We Now?

Dr. Bill Rivers

Executive Director

Joint National Committee for Languages and
National Council on Languages and International Studies

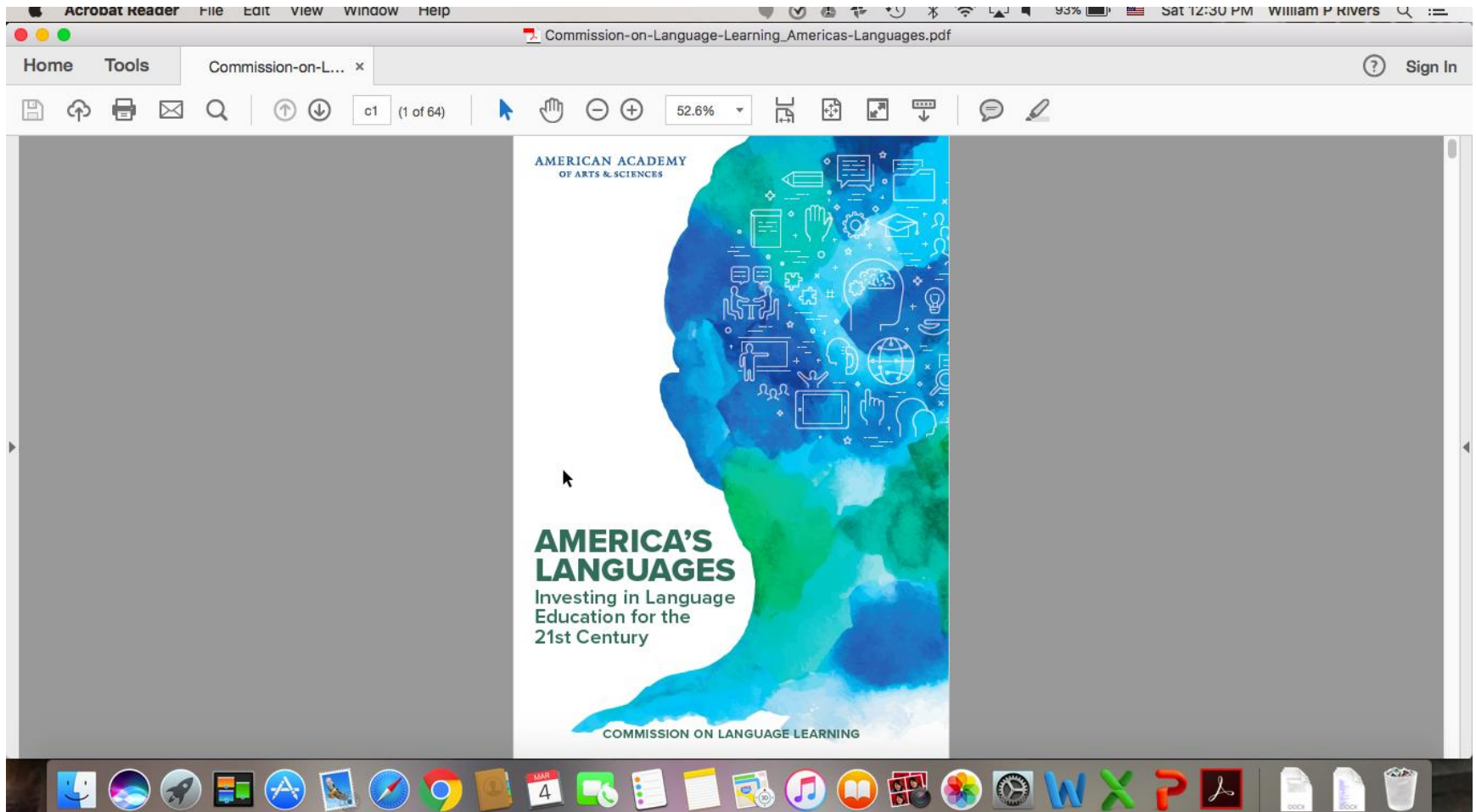
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An introduction first...

- JNCL-NCLIS
 - Founded 1974 by ACTFL, AATF, AATG, AATI, AATSEEL, AATSP, ATJ, MLA, NCLG, NMFLTA, TESOL
 - Works to develop policy recommendations (JNCL) and advocate for them to the US Government and business community (NCLIS)
- 140 member organizations



The Commission on Language Learning!



The Commission to Date

- Report: *America's Languages*
- Data Report: *The State of Languages in the US*
- Briefing Papers:
 - America's Languages: Challenges and Promise
 - The Contribution of Language to the Economic Interests of the US
 - Foreign Language, Cultural Diplomacy, and Global Security
 - Language and Productivity for All Americans: Penn State University, Center for Language Science
 - Language Preservation and Language Access
- All available at <https://www.amacad.org/content/Research/researchproject.aspx?i=21896>



The State of Language in the US: Enrollments (good news & bad)

- 2013-14 Data: 30% increase in K-12 enrollments since 2007
- K-12 survey funded by DLNSEO, done by American Councils, ACTFL, NCSSFL, MLA, CAL
- K-12 enrolments:
 - 10.9m of 54.1m students
 - 21% of HS students in 2013-2014
 - 16% of HS students in 2007
 - 31% **INCREASE**
- Higher education
 - MLA self-funded survey in 2012-2013
 - 2013: 1.52m enrollments in higher education
 - 2009: 1.61m enrollments in higher education
 - Higher education enrollments have declined by from 8.7% to 8.1 % of overall enrollments in higher education, a 6.9%
- **Seals of Biliteracy: 27 in place, 13 more states working towards the Seal!**
- **Questions:** Growth in immersions? Proficiency outcomes? Articulation?



Findings of the Commission (1)

- The ability to understand, speak, read, and write in world languages, in addition to English, is critical to success in business, research, and international relations in the twenty-first century.
- The United States needs more people to speak languages other than English in order to provide social and legal services for a changing population.
- The study of a second language has been linked to improved learning outcomes in other subjects, enhanced cognitive ability, and the development of empathy and effective interpretive skills. The use of a second language has been linked to a delay in certain manifestations of aging.
- The United States lags behind most nations of the world, including European nations and China, in the percentage of its citizens who have some knowledge of a second language.



Findings of the Commission (2)

- One of the biggest obstacles to improved language learning is a national shortage of qualified teachers. Forty-four states and Washington, D.C., report that they cannot find enough qualified teachers to meet current needs, but every school district in the nation responds to the teacher shortage in its own way (by cutting classes, by combining classes, by contracting before- or after-school enrichment programs, to name a few). We need better information about these district-level responses to attach a specific number to the national teacher shortage, and encourage any study that advances our knowledge of its size and scope.
- Technological innovations will play an ever more significant role in language learning, as a motivating factor for a new generation of students, as a means for providing educational opportunities to more students across the nation, and as an aid and reference for people in their everyday lives.
- Native American languages are distinct in political status and history, and are the object of school- and community-based reclamation and retention efforts aligned with the Native American Languages Act of 1990 (NALA).

Recommendations of the Commission on Language Learning

- **Increase the number of language teachers at all levels of education so that every child in every state has the opportunity to learn a language in addition to English.**
- **Supplement language instruction across the education system through public-private partnerships among schools, government, philanthropies, businesses, and local community members.**
- **Support heritage languages already spoken in the United States, and help these languages persist from one generation to the next.**
- **Provide targeted support and programming for Native American languages as defined in the Native American Languages Act.**
- **Promote opportunities for students to learn languages in other countries by experiencing other cultures and immersing themselves in multilingual environments.**



America's Languages Working Group

- Charge: “to provide advice and leadership for implementing the Commission’s recommendations, with the goal of amplifying the ultimate message that language education can be and should be a national education priority.”
- Mission:
 - Equal access to all of “America’s Languages”
 - Broad collaboration among all stakeholders in the “Language Enterprise” (academe, business, government, NGOs, and heritage & indigenous language communities)
- Timeline: Monthly meetings for one year



America's Languages Working Group: Members

- John Tessitore, Senior Project Director, American Academy of Arts and Sciences; **Chair**, Working Group on *America's Languages*
- Maria Pulcini, Managing Policy Analyst, Joint National Committee for Languages, **Secretary**, Working Group
- Marty Abbott,* Executive Director, American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
- Mohamed Abdel-Kader, Vice President and Executive Director of the Stevens Initiative, The Aspen Institute
- Catelin Aiwohi, Professional Staff Member, United States Senate Committee on Indian Affairs
- Erlin Barnard, professor of Asian Languages and Culture, University of Wisconsin-Madison, past president of the Coalition on the Teaching of Indonesian and Malaysian
- Dick Brecht, Co-Director, American Councils Research Center
- Dan Davidson,* President and CEO, American Councils for International Education
- Ambassador Ruth Davis, former director of the National Foreign Affairs Training Center
- Kathleen Diamond, Founder and Principal, Kathleen Diamond & Co.
- Rosemary Feal,* Executive Director, Modern Language Association
- Joel Gomez, President, Center for Applied Linguistics
- Stephen Kidd, Executive Director, The National Humanities Alliance
- Gail McGinn, McGinn Consulting LLC, former Department of Defense Senior Language Authority
- Bill Rivers, Executive Director, Joint National Committee for Languages
- Julia Smith, Vice President for Federal Affairs, American Association of Universities
- Emily Spinelli, Executive Director, American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese
- Santiago Wood, Executive Director, National Association for Bilingual Education
- Sonia Zamborsky, Director of Digital Globalization, Marriott International



Policy Action: World Language Advancement and Readiness Act (H.R. 1239)

- Introduced February 28, in the House of Representatives, by Rep. David Price (D-NC-4)
- 19 co-sponsors (14 Democrats, 5 Republicans)
- Creates a grant program in the Department of Defense
 - 3 year grants to LEAs
 - High quality language instruction in K-12
 - Emphasis on STEM and co-curricular offerings
 - 75% for critical languages
 - All natural human languages eligible
- Now in the House Armed Services Committee, Subcommittee on Personnel



Policy Action: Biliteracy Education Seal and Teaching Act – “BEST” Act (H.R. 3716)

- Introduced September 8, in the House of Representatives, by Rep. Julia Brownley (D-CA-26)
- 7 co-sponsors (All Democrats)
- Creates a grant program in the Department of Education:
 - 2 year grants to State Education Agencies
 - Establish or improve Seal of Biliteracy
- Now in the House Committee on Education and the Workforce



Policy Action: Paul Simon Study Abroad Program Act (S. 601)

- Introduced March 9, n the Senate, by Senator Richard Durbin (D-IL)
- 6 co-sponsors (4 Democrats, 2 Republicans)
- Creates a grant program in the Department of Education:
 - Grants to Institutions of Higher Education (and consortia) to promote study abroad
 - Emphasis on less traditional study abroad destinations
- Goal of 1m students studying abroad in 10 years
- Now in the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions



Working Group Actions

- Summarize mission: “Language: A National Imperative,” to be signed and endorsed by corporations, scholarly associations, NGOs, and others—and publicized as a statement of support for language education.
- Pursue the implementation of the Commission recommendations, including, but not limited to:
 - Examining recommendations and suggesting concrete implementation initiatives (existing and proposed) with baselines, goals, objectives and timelines
 - For example, the group would coordinate an effort to meet the Commission’s goal of providing federal aid for summer study abroad.
- Pursue partnerships with independent organizations, in order to bring together the Language Enterprise, funders and national thought leaders, to accelerate the implementation of the Commission’s recommendations
- Explore options for organizing local events that feature policymakers, language educators, and community stakeholders.
- Coordinate efforts to improve data collection about language education, including a more accurate understanding of teacher shortages and student demand, K-16.
- Establish a clearinghouse of local initiatives supporting the Commission



Links!!!

- Commission on Language Learning:
<https://www.amacad.org/content/Research/researchproject.aspx?i=21896>
- www.leadwithlanguages.org
- Take action:
 - www.languagepolicy.org
 - <http://www.leadwithlanguages.org/language-advocacy/contact-your-legislators/>
- Feedback to the Working Group:
americaslanguages@languagepolicy.org

